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New Hampshire FSA Newsletter

New Hampshire Farm Service Agency

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Please contact your local FSA Office for questions specific to your operation or county.

USDA to Issue Disaster Assistance to Help Honeybee, Livestock and Farm-Raised Fish Producers

Farm Bill Program Offers Producers Relief for 2014 Losses in more than 40 States including New Hampshire

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency today announced that nearly 2,700 applicants will begin receiving disaster assistance through the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) for losses experienced from Oct. 1, 2013, through Sept. 30, 2014.

The program, re-authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill, provides disaster relief to livestock, honeybee, and farm-raised fish producers not covered by other agricultural disaster assistance programs. Eligible losses may include excessive heat or winds, flooding, blizzards, hail, wildfires, lightning strikes, volcanic eruptions and diseases, or in the case of honeybees, losses due to colony collapse disorder. Beekeepers, most of whom suffered honeybee colony losses, represent more than half of ELAP recipients.

The farm bill caps ELAP disaster funding at \$20 million per federal fiscal year and the Budget Control Act of 2011, passed by

Congress, requires USDA to reduce payments by 7.3 percent, beginning Oct. 1, 2014. To accommodate the number of requests for ELAP assistance, which exceeded 2014 funding, payments will be reduced to ensure that all eligible applicants receive a prorated share.

Today's announcement was made possible by the 2014 Farm Bill, which builds on historic economic gains in rural America over the past six years, while achieving meaningful reform and billions of dollars in savings for the taxpayer. Since enactment, USDA has made significant progress to implement each provision of this critical legislation, including providing disaster relief to farmers and ranchers; strengthening risk management tools; expanding access to rural credit; funding critical research; establishing innovative public-private conservation partnerships; developing new markets for rural-made products; and investing in infrastructure, housing and community facilities to help improve quality of life in rural America. For more information, visit <http://www.usda.gov/farmbill>.

To learn more about ELAP, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/elap. For more information about USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) disaster assistance programs, visit disaster.usda.fsa.gov or contact your local FSA office at <http://offices.usda.gov>.

2015 ACREAGE REPORTING DATES

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit your local County FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline.

The following acreage reporting dates are:

July 15, 2015:	Forage Seeding, Perennial Forage, and all other crops
November 15, 2015:	Fall Seeded Small Grains
January 15, 2016:	Apple, Peaches

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendars days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.
- Please note that the Acreage Reporting date for Perennial has changed. The date is now July 15th.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact your local County FSA office.

USDA Announces Changes to Fruit, Vegetable and Wild Rice Planting Rules

Farm Service Agency (FSA) has announced fruit, vegetable and wild rice provisions that affect producers who intend to participate in certain programs authorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014.

Producers who intend to participate in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs are subject to an acre-for-acre payment reduction when fruits and nuts, vegetables or wild rice are planted on the payment acres of a farm. Payment reductions do not apply to mung beans, dry peas, lentils or chickpeas. Planting fruits, vegetables or wild rice on acres that are not considered payment acres will not result in a payment reduction. Farms that are eligible to participate in ARC/PLC but are not enrolled for a particular year may plant unlimited fruits, vegetables and wild rice for that year but will not receive ARC/PLC payments for that year. Eligibility for succeeding years is not affected.

Planting and harvesting fruits, vegetables and wild rice on ARC/PLC acreage is subject to the acre-for-acre payment reduction when those crops are planted on either more than 15 percent of the base acres of a farm enrolled in ARC using the county coverage or PLC, or more than 35 percent of the base acres of a farm enrolled in ARC using the individual coverage.

Fruits, vegetables and wild rice that are planted in a double-cropping practice will not cause a payment reduction if the farm is in a double-cropping region as designated by the USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation

SAVE TIME – MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH FSA

To insure maximum use of your time and to insure that you are afforded our full attention to your important business needs, please call our office ahead of your visit to set an appointment and to discuss any records or documentation that you may need to have with you when you arrive for your appointment. For local FSA Service Center contact information, please visit:

<http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app> .

Microloans

Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds farmers and ranchers that the FSA borrowing limit for microloans increased from \$35,000 to \$50,000, on Nov. 7, 2014. Microloans offer borrowers simplified lending with less paperwork.

The microloan change allows beginning, small and mid-sized farmers to access an additional \$15,000 in loans using a simplified application process with up to seven years to repay. Microloans

are part of USDA's continued commitment to [small and midsized farming operations](#)

To complement the microloan program additional changes to FSA eligibility requirements will enhance beginning farmers and ranchers access to land, a key barrier to entry level producers. FSA policies related to farm experience have changed so that other types of skills may be considered to meet the direct farming experience required for farm ownership loan eligibility. Operation or management of non-farm businesses, leadership positions while serving in the military or advanced education in an agricultural field will now count towards the experience applicants need to show when applying for farm ownership loans. **Important Note:** Microloans cannot be used to purchase real estate.

Since 2010, more than 50 percent of USDA's farm loans now go to beginning farmers and FSA has increased its lending to targeted underserved producers by nearly 50 percent.

Please review the FSA [Microloan Program Fact Sheet](#) for program application, eligibility and related information.

Beginning Farmer Loans

FSA assists beginning farmers to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's average size farm.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).